Anglican Diocese of the Living Word

Policy For The Protection Of

Vulnerable Adults

WELCOME FROM THE BISHOP

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace, peace, and blessings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As disciples of Christ, we are entrusted with the sacred responsibility to care deeply and compassionately for one another, particularly the most vulnerable among us. It is through this care that we bear witness to Christ's justice, mercy, and love. With this sacred calling in mind, I am introducing a diocesan policy specifically designed to protect vulnerable adults.

As a diocese, we recognize that policies addressing abuse, including sexual abuse, may be deeply sensitive and potentially triggering for those who have experienced such trauma. Your story, healing, and dignity as a beloved child of God remain profoundly sacred and worthy of respect. It is my earnest prayer that the redeeming love of Christ, coupled with the nurturing support of His community, will foster deep and lasting healing within your heart.

Clergy of this diocese called, with Christ-like compassion, to prioritize the protection of everyone entrusted to their care, especially vulnerable adults. Clergy set a powerful example within our faith community by:

- Affirming and safeguarding the dignity and rights of vulnerable adults.
- Implementing and advocating for policies and practices that proactively prevent harm.
- Promptly and compassionately addressing signs of abuse and neglect.
- Providing thoughtful and attentive pastoral care.
- Establishing effective systems of accountability.
- Actively promoting opportunities for redemption and healing.

The role of clergy in protecting vulnerable adults is deeply spiritual and profoundly practical, grounded in their pastoral responsibility to cultivate a secure, nurturing and safe Christian environment. By faithfully carrying out this sacred responsibility, clergy not only safeguard vulnerable adults but also affirm the Church's testimony as a sanctuary of hope, healing, and restoration for all people.

In Christ's service,

Bishop Julian Dobbs

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy provides guidance, information, instruction, and common practices to direct and inform the clergy and laity in the churches in The Anglican Diocese of the Living Word in the detection, prevention, reduction, and elimination of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and abandonment of vulnerable adults. The policy is a reference manual that provides procedures and standards of care for diligently protecting vulnerable adults and addressing situations when they are at risk or have been put in harm's way.

THE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

The Bishop, in collaboration with the Standing Committee [or its equivalent], establishes a Safeguarding Committee, which is responsible for the creation and promulgation of the Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults, under the authority and oversight of the Bishop and the Standing Committee in accordance with the canons of the Diocese.

There shall be a Committee on Safeguarding the Church, which shall consist of at least three and up to five members. Members shall be appointed by the Bishop after consultation with the Chancellor and the Standing Committee. The committee shall annually audit the policies for the protection of children and adults of at least twenty percent of congregations within the diocese. For the purposes of this policy, 'congregation' shall include any congregation, mission or church plant affiliated with the Diocese. Each congregation shall be subject to an audit at least every five years. The purpose of the audit shall be:

i. To verify that each congregation has a policy in place for the protection of adults and children that meets the minimum requirements of the ADLW and ACNA.
ii. To verify that the policies of every congregation meet the minimum requirements of the state in which that congregation is located.

From time to time, ideally at least annually, it is recommended that the committee review and, if necessary, revise the policy considering practical experience, medical and other scholarly research, legal developments, and other relevant considerations.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY

Each congregation is responsible for adopting its own policies for the protection of vulnerable adults. Some congregations may choose to adopt this policy, ensuring to add any provisions required by the civil authorities in the state in which they are located. Other congregations may choose to write their own policy. In either case, the Rector of each local parish is responsible for the administration of their local policy within the parish, mission, or church plant he/she leads and for providing all reports requested by the diocese. In the absence of a Rector, the [priest-in-charge, lay leader, or the Senior Warden] will be responsible. Duties may be delegated, except in those areas specifically delineating action by the Rector.

The Bishop in cooperation with the Standing Committee is responsible for maintaining the diocesan Policy for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults in accordance with the Canons of the Diocese.

POLICY SUMMARY

The Anglican Diocese of the Living Word requires that each church (see definition) is expected to have in place these procedures (or their equivalent) for preventing misconduct and/or abuse of vulnerable adults. Below are the key points to remember from this sample policy:

AWARENESS

- All clergy, employees, and vestry (see definition below) must be screened, background checked, and trained on this policy prior to serving
- All clergy, employees, and vestry must complete the sexual abuse prevention training prior to serving
- Documentation for laity is maintained by the church; the Diocese maintains documentation for clergy

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

- Pastoral counseling limited to six [6] or fewer per person
- Verbal interaction should be kind, clean, legal, and age-specific
- All interactions should include:
    - Hands off restroom policies – support only provided by caregivers
    - Displays of affection should remain in public view
    - Vulnerable adults have both the ability for autonomy and the need for protection. Provide supervision based on each person's ability and need.)
    - Vulnerable adults may desire for their caregivers to be present while interacting with clergy employees and vestry.
    - Vulnerable adults may have Supervisory Plans to be followed.
    - Follow all other policies outlined below (medical, restroom, transportation, overnight, off-campus, responding and reporting); provide a safe environment.

REPORTING

- Any report of misconduct or abuse should be reported to the proper authorities immediately, as described below.
- Allegations against clergy are to be reported directly to a Diocesan Reports Receiver through the [hotline, email and/or website]; allegations against a Bishop should be reported to the Archbishop.
- Allegations against all lay persons are to be reported directly to senior church leadership (Rector, priest-in-charge, or Senior Warden).

COMPLIANCE

- Churches are responsible for all documentation regarding screening, training, and implementation for non-clergy employees, and vestry, in compliance with this policy and with their insurance carrier's requirements.
- The Diocese is responsible for all documentation regarding screening, training, and implementation for clergy, in compliance with this policy and with the diocesan insurance carrier's requirements.
- Documentation is to be completed, submitted, and filed no later than May of each year.

DEFINITIONS

The Bishop and the Diocese strictly prohibit all types of abuse (as defined in this document), by any member of the clergy, anyone pursuing ordained ministry, any employee, staff person, or vestry member working in any capacity for the Diocese or any diocesan related institution/church in this Diocese.

For the purpose of this policy, please note the interpretation of the following terms:

- **Certified Adult:** an adult who has gone through the full screening and training process outlined in this policy and who has signed a sworn statement affirming they have no history of abuse or neglect involving children or vulnerable adults. All clergy (including those seeking ordination or transfer), employees, and vestry members are required to be certified.
- **Abuse:** interactions in which one person behaves in a cruel, violent, demeaning, or invasive manner toward another person which causes or is likely to cause harm or injury. The term encompasses physical, sexual, and psychological (emotional) mistreatment.
    - **Pastoral Abuse:** Pastoral abuse may be found when a person with spiritual authority demonstrates a pattern of control, intimidation, manipulation, coercion, isolation, elitism, censorship of decision making, exploitation, or the use of the name of God to get someone to do something inconsistent with Scripture, against their will, or opposing our foundational documents. This pattern may include the use of spiritual truths or Scripture to harm others. Pastoral abuse is unacceptable in our churches (see Matthew 7, Matthew 11, Matthew 23).

- **Advocates:** person(s) selected by the complainant with consent of the Bishop, or appointed by the Bishop if the complainant desires, to assist the complainant(s) in understanding and participating in the disciplinary processes of the church, including obtaining assistance to formulate and submit a complaint that conforms to the canons. Advocates are not to serve as legal advisors or pastors.
- **Bishop:** the Bishop of the Diocese, Suffragan Bishop, and includes the ecclesiastical entity authorized to act in the absence of the Bishop, such as the Standing Committee.
- **Chaplain:** spiritual advisor to the complainant, or to the respondent, selected by the complainant or respondent, or appointed by the Bishop if the complainant or respondent desires.
- **Church:** all fellowships, congregations, parishes, church plants, and any other worshiping entity affiliated with or in association with the Diocese.
- **Clergy:** for the purposes of this document clergy includes those ordained in the Anglican Church in North America, as well as those pursuing ordained ministry (including aspirants, postulants, candidates, ordinands, and transfers), whether employed or non-stipendiary.
- **Complainant:** the person making an allegation.
- **Consent:** consent is when someone agrees, gives permission, or says yes to sexual, romantic or emotional activity with another person. Consent is always freely given and all people in a sexual, romantic, or emotional situation must feel that they are able to say yes or to stop the sexual, romantic, or emotional activity at any point. There is a power dynamic when people have authority, and this may undermine the validity of consent. For example, there is a difference in power between a supervisor and a subordinate employee that could undermine the validity of consent. The fact that sexual activity is initiated by someone other than the church worker does not relieve that worker of responsibility, nor does it make sexual activity under those circumstances acceptable. Under no circumstances can a vulnerable adult give consent.
- **Consultants:** person(s) appointed by the Bishop to consult with and advise the respondent accused of misconduct/abuse and his or her legal advisors at reasonable times prior to the issuance of a Presentment. The consultant should be knowledgeable in the canons of the ACNA and the ADLW and shall explain the rights of the members of the clergy and the alternatives. The selection of the consultant may consider the complainant's needs/requests.
- **Dating Relationships:** consensual relationships of clergy or employees with a parishioner in which two parties are exploring a consensual relationship that may lead to a Christian marriage. In such situations, the relationship is to be conducted with the knowledge of the Rector (or Bishop in the case of clergy). Non-clergy consensual dating between individuals not involved in supervisory relationships are excluded from the definition of sexual exploitation. Clergy have the duty to report any dating relationship to their Bishop.
- **Diocesan Reports Receiver:** a Diocesan Reports Receiver is an unbiased receiver who is trained to respond to allegations of misconduct/abuse made through a designated diocesan hotline, website, or email address. They are trained to deploy predetermined notification policies, depending upon the written allegation submitted. Per the ACNA Title 1, Canon 5, Section 9, each diocese shall appoint at least two Diocesan Reports Receivers to receive reports of misconduct. In no event shall any Chancellor of the Diocese, or others that, according to our canons, cannot serve in this role, serve as a Diocesan Reports Receiver.

- **Director of Safeguarding:** the Director of Safeguarding consults with the Bishop's staff to oversee the policies and procedures regarding misconduct or abuse in the Diocese. The Director of Safeguarding will oversee training, provide prevention methods and resources, respond to inquiries, help handle responses to crises, and recommend policy changes.
- **Mandated Reporter:** adults that are required to report suspected abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a vulnerable adult is a victim of abuse, including clergy or spiritual leaders of any regularly established congregation and individuals, paid or unpaid, who, as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service, are responsible for the vulnerable adult's welfare or have direct contact with vulnerable adults. Verify applicable state law for the jurisdiction in which the congregation, mission, or church plant operates.
- **Misconduct:** any violation or misuse of procedures, policies, practices, or processes by an individual or group to improperly control or manipulate others within an organization.
- **Rector:** the person in charge of a parish, including instances where such person has a title other than Rector (such as vicar, priest-in-charge, deacon, or church planter).
- **Respondent:** anyone who is accused of misconduct or abuse.
- **Sexual misconduct:** includes a range of unwelcome and unwanted sexual conduct, including grooming; verbal, emotional, and/or physical sexual harassment; sexual assault; molestation; and all forms of sexual violence. Sexual misconduct is not restricted to intercourse but includes a wide range of inappropriate behaviors including inappropriate emotional intimacy, as well as the following:
  - **Sexual misconduct against minors/vulnerable adults:** sexual misconduct against any person, including but not limited to, any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or is a vulnerable adult.
  - **Grooming:** a technique used to break down barriers of protection. Abusers will use grooming techniques to gain trust, continually testing boundaries in such a way that inappropriate behavior seeps into the relationship without consent or even acknowledgement. Grooming usually includes gaining access through trust, targeting a particular type of person as a victim, slowly eroding boundaries, and employing methods to keep the victim quiet.
  - **Sexual harassment:** sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, quid pro quo behavior, sexually motivated physical contact or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature; including but not limited to, sexually oriented humor or language, questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference, undesired physical contact, inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance, or repeated requests for social engagements. This applies with children and with adults where there is an employment, mentoring, or collegial relationship between the persons involved. This might include:
    - Inappropriate touching.
    - Sexually oriented comments about an individual's body.
    - Sending sexually explicit or offensive communications (e.g., text messages, emails, social media messages or posts).
    - Voyeurism, including viewing or displaying objects or pictures that are sexual in nature.

    - Submission to such sexual conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution.
    - Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual.
    - Conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
    - Subjecting an individual to sexual jokes or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.
  - **Sexual coercion:** the use of physical or emotional power to gain sexual gratification.
  - **Sexual exploitation of adults:** including but not limited to, the development of or the attempt to develop, a sexual relationship between a member of the clergy, employee, or volunteer affiliated with the ADLW and a person with whom he/she has a pastoral relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual. Sexual exploitation includes activity during the course of a pastoral relationship such as sexual involvement or sexually demeaning comments. The apparent consent of a possible victim to a sexual or romantic relationship seldom determines whether there has been sexual exploitation. Non-clergy consensual dating between individuals not involved in supervisory relationships are excluded from the definition of sexual exploitation.
- **Vulnerable Adult:** a person over 18 years of age who, due to disability or infirmity, has an impaired ability to protect themselves from harm, neglect, or exploitation. This may include those with mental or physical impairments, neurodiverse persons, older adults, or those who are unable to care for themselves due to various factors.

For the purposes of this policy:

- Allegations of misconduct/abuse within the church will be taken seriously and deserve a timely response from the Diocese.
- The Bishop holds both pastoral and disciplinary responsibilities. When addressing allegations of misconduct/abuse by a person or persons within the Church, the Bishop should carefully avoid being the person to provide pastoral care to either the complainant or the accused. The Bishop and the Director of Safeguarding may provide additional care to respondent(s), complainant(s), and church(es) involved. He may also utilize Advocates, Chaplains, and/or Consultants to share in practical and pastoral care for them.
- The Director of Safeguarding is under the authority of the Standing Committee.
- A person can be wrongly accused of misconduct or abuse.
- All reports of abuse or misconduct first go to the Reports Receiver, who ensures the individual is safe, that legal authorities are contacted, and that all appropriate parties are contacted. The reports receiver in consultation with the Bishops, Director of Safeguarding, and others identified will send the report to the Investigation Committee.

- Leaders who learn of misconduct or abuse by their clergy or lay leaders ordinarily have an ethical responsibility to follow up on this information by reporting the information to the appropriate ecclesiastical authorities and, when necessary, legal authorities.
- Leaders have an ethical responsibility and are required to self-report any misconduct or abuse, which will be followed up on and reported to the appropriate ecclesiastical authorities and, when necessary, legal authorities.

AWARENESS

AWARENESS

While education about misconduct and abuse is only one part of what is required to build an environment that protects vulnerable adults from abuse, awareness and clarity about various aspects of misconduct are essential to create a healthy church that seeks to protect its people.

SCREENING

One of the foundational steps to protecting our people from abuse is the careful screening of clergy, employees, and vestry. Screening is designed to expose any potential concerns regarding high-risk offenders before they ever are engaged in one of our ministries. This should include background checks, reference checks, interviews, and minimum attendance periods. These efforts are completed to do all we can to create a safe environment for our people.

To help understand who must be screened, when they are to be screened, and where to keep documentation:

Screening				
	Background Checks		Application/References/Interview	
Role	Required	When	Required	Who Keeps Record?
Clergy (includes Transfers & Postulants)	Yes	Prior to ordination, transfer, and/or hire; 5-year renewal	Yes	Diocese
Employees	Yes	Prior to hire; 5-year renewal	Yes	Congregation, Mission, or Church Plant
Vestry	Yes	Prior to term; 5-year renewal	No	Congregation, Mission, or Church Plant
Child and Youth Wroker	Yes	Prior to serving; 5-year renewal	Yes	Congregation, Mission, or Church Plant

Screening includes the following procedures:

- **Background checks** – all clergy, employees, and vestry in diocesan institutions, programs, and congregations should have background checks completed prior to serving, hire, ordination or transfer (as applicable), in compliance with the insurance carrier's requirements and redone every five [5] years.
  - Non-clergy employees, and vestry can complete their background checks [through Protect My Ministry using the ACNA negotiated rate, or through an equivalent program]. This should include criminal history, sex offender registry check and, as appropriate, DMV driving license check (see individual state websites). A Credit Bureau Record Check is also recommended for clergy, treasurers, bookkeepers, check signers, and those having access to any church financial accounts and/or credit cards.
  - The screening of clergy is the responsibility of the ADLW. Clergy seeking canonical residence or license must be background checked through Oxford Document Management (ODM) or other diocesan-approved screening providers prior to the acceptance of Letters Dimissory or issuance of a License. It is the responsibility of the church to notify the diocesan office to begin a background check as soon as the vestry has decided who they would like to call. A call should not be considered final until the results of the background check are received.

- Clergy background checks will include:
    - Inquiries of all Bishops having past or present canonical authority over the individual, all schools attended by the individual during the past five years, and all employers of the individual during the past five [5] years. If the individual has had more than one employer for over five years, then inquiries will be made of the two most recent employers. In the case of clergy who have served as Rector, "employer" shall be the Senior Wardens of congregations served during the past [five years].
    - Motor Vehicle record check and Credit Bureau check.
    - Sexual Misconduct and Criminal Record Check.
    - Local criminal history records are checked through local law enforcement agencies.
    - Statewide criminal history records check through the appropriate state law enforcement agencies.
    - References will be secured from immediate supervisors at the [three] most recent places of employment and results documented.
    - When available, a thorough social media search will be conducted.
    - Each member of the clergy domiciled or licensed in the Diocese will be required to update and pay for their ODM background check on a five-year rotating schedule to be administered by the Diocese. Their church may choose to pay this fee.

It is the responsibility of all clergy to cooperate fully in all aspects of the screening process and to submit in a timely manner all documents needed to complete such checks.

- **Membership** – Vestry should complete a six-month minimum attendance prior to appointment, which includes active participation in the life of the church, including Sunday morning worship.
- **Application** – For employment and for all volunteers who work with vulnerable adults, the host church should have the applicant fill out a complete application which includes:
    - whether or not they, or any immediate family member or person living in their household, have been convicted of, pled nolo contender to, had adjudication withheld for, or have an active arrest for any crime involving abuse or neglect.
    - whether or not they have been diagnosed with any paraphiliac psychological condition.
    - conduct-criminal history and the National Sexual Offender Registry checks.
    - secure references from immediate supervisors at the three most recent places of employment and results documented.
    - check the applicant's references.
    - conduct a face-to-face interview.
    - when available, a thorough social media search should be conducted.
- It is recommended that churches familiarize themselves with effective screening practices and recognizing high-risk applicants. *Protect My Ministry, Brotherhood Mutual, and Ministry Safe* each offer training on skilled screening for employees.
- **Prior Sexual Offenders Policy:** https://www.adpgh.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/TEMPLATE-Registered-Sex-Offender-Protocol-ADP.docx

TRAINING

Clergy, employees, and vestry must be properly trained to care for those they serve in ministry. Training includes job functions and the practices outlined in this policy to ensure the environment is safe for our people. Sexual abuse awareness training by MinistrySafe may be completed online and must be renewed every two years. Training on the ADLW policy for the protection of vulnerable adults must be completed every two years and in person.

To help understand who must be trained as well as the timeline for training, see this example:

MinistrySafe Training					
	MinistrySafe awareness training		ADLW Policy to Protect Vulnerable Adults training		
Role	Required	When	Required	When	Who Keeps Record?
Clergy (includes Transfers & Postulants)	Yes	Prior to ordination, transfer, and/or hire; 2-year renewal	Yes	Within 1 month; 2-year renewal	Diocese
Employees	Yes	Prior to hire; 2-year renewal	Yes	Within 6 months; 2-year renewal	Congregation, Mission, or Church Plant
Vestry	Yes	Prior to term; 2-year renewal	Yes	Within 6 months; 2-year renewal	Congregation, Mission, or Church Plant
Child and Youth Worker	Yes	Prior to serving; 2- year renewal	Yes	Within 6 months; 2-year renewal	Congregation, Mission, or Church Plant

- **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training:** The first portion of the safeguarding training is currently completed through MinistrySafe and can be completed online or in person. This training must be renewed every two-years and must be completed prior to ordination, transfer, and/or hire for clergy, prior to hire for employees, prior to term for vestry, and prior to serving for vulnerable adults.
- **Policy for the Protection Vulnerable Adults Training:** The second portion of safeguarding training will be offered in person by your church's Safeguarding Coordinator. This training covers the content of this policy and must be renewed every two years. In addition to completing this training, all clergy, employees, and vestry must certify that they have read the diocesan policy and signed the Sworn Statement affirming they have no history of abuse or neglect involving children or vulnerable adults.

- Clery, employee, vestry member, and vulnerable adult service provider must provide to the diocese or church documentation of both the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training, Review of the ADLW policy to protect vulnerable adults sign off sheet, and a copy of the sworn statement affirming they have no history of abuse or neglect involving children or vulnerable adults.

Please see additional screening and training resources under "Resources" below.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

INTERACTION

Christian ministry relies not only on right belief but also on right behavior, including interacting with those in the church and in the community. All allegations of misconduct or abuse will likely result from personal interactions and therefore it is important to establish communities of health that reinforce appropriate boundaries, build trust, demonstrate care and respect, and seek justice for those who abuse these. This section outlines guidelines for communication, counseling, spiritual formation and discipleship, interaction with vulnerable adults, and supervisory procedures for vulnerable adults.

It is not harassment or a hostile environment when a leader communicates verbally or nonverbally, or takes action, including appropriate discipline, to uphold the biblical, orthodox, and historic Christian faith as expressed in the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, the ACNA Constitution and Canons, and the Anglican formularies, unless such verbal or nonverbal communication, or action is unreasonable and inconsistent with the standards of conduct set forth in the same authorities.

Verbal interactions among Clergy, employees, and vestry should be edifying, respectful, and should refrain from inappropriate topics. Specifically, the following are inappropriate:

- **Intimidation:** behavior directed toward an individual with the intention of causing fear, including forcing someone to do something they do not want to do out of fear.
- **Nonverbal Harassment:** includes distribution, display or use of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility toward an individual or group because of nationality, national origin, race, color, religion, age, biological sex, pregnancy, appearance, mental or physical disability, marital or other legally protected status. This also includes graphic gestures and making sexual gestures through hand or body movements.
- **Verbal Harassment:** includes unreasonable statements or comments that are offensive regarding a person's nationality, national origin, race, color, religion, age, biological sex, pregnancy, appearance, mental or physical disability, marital status, or any other status protected by applicable federal or state law.

- **Inappropriate Use of Technology:** sending sexually explicit or offensive communications (e.g., text messages, emails, social media messages or posts) is included in the definition of harassment and will not be tolerated [ADLW social media policy: https://s3.amazonaws.com/media.cloversites.com/83/835b7ff2-914d-435a-97f2-c22ad3966ee2/documents/Social_Media_Policy.pdf] . Use personal interactions on social media avenues to model appropriate behavior and language, both on and off social media. Church leaders should be aware that their behavior reflects Christ and the Church.

[Sexual and other unlawful harassment should be addressed by a separate, stand-alone policy that specifically addresses relevant legal definitions of unlawful harassment, that provides clear mechanisms for reporting, investigating, and addressing unlawful harassment and that includes appropriate protections for reasonable religious speech and conduct. See "Resources" below for a sample policy.]

Relating well in addressing Sexuality and Identity: Every effort should be made to treat all people as individuals made in the image of God. It is essential that we strive to build an environment that does not harass, discriminate, intimidate, or devalue God's creation. We recognize that same-sex sexual relationships are sinful, but so also is pornography, fornication and adultery, as well as non-sexual sins such as greed, disregard for the poor, and self-righteousness.

The call to pastoral ministry includes the charge to lead with gentleness, scriptural clarity, and a desire to seek the lost. To hold to, proclaim, and act in accordance with the biblical, orthodox, and historic Christian faith is not in and of itself abuse or harassment.

In order to provide pastoral ministry to those facing same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria, therefore, the following are recommended whenever necessary:

- For overnight events, it is recommended that the church's leadership team, and the caregiver/guardian of the vulnerable adult, outline an agreed upon Supervisory Plan designed to safeguard all participants.
- Churches should endeavor to make sure all students do not feel isolated, but rather included, welcomed, valued, and respected. This is essential, especially at meals, morning and evening scheduled events, and spontaneous moments. Ongoing and open communication with parents who have vulnerable adult-specific concerns is encouraged.
- For those churches that are able, consider offering a family (non-gendered) bathroom as an act of hospitality.
- [Insert Diocesan policy on human sexuality here.]

Pornography creation, viewing, or distribution: printed or visual material containing the explicit description or display of sexual organs or activity, intended to stimulate erotic rather than aesthetic or emotional feelings. All clergy are required to avoid creating, viewing, or distributing pornography at all times, not just while working or in church facilities. This is offered without the involvement of the Bishop unless clergy fail to follow through with a recovery plan. It is never appropriate to view pornography. When this includes a vulnerable person who is unable to make decisions for themselves, it is considered abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry.

Additional considerations for communication with vulnerable adults: Verbal interactions between leaders and vulnerable adults should be encouraging, constructive, and mindful of the mission of aiding those individuals and their caregivers in love and hospitality. To this end, clergy, employees, and vestry should avoid talking to vulnerable adults in a way that is, or could be, construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, clergy, employees, and vestry are expected to refrain from using vulgar language in the presence of vulnerable adults. Concerns about vulnerable adults should be directed to caregivers, legal guardians, the appropriate ministry leader, or the clergy.

Clergy, employees, and vestry should avoid engaging in any sexually oriented communications with vulnerable adults and should refrain from discussing any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any vulnerable adult. Clergy, employees, and vestry should report any sexually oriented communications involving a vulnerable adult to the appropriate ministry leader or the clergy.

- Sexually Oriented Materials: Staff members and volunteers may employ (subject to limitations imposed by the Rector) age-appropriate materials when leading discussions dealing with human sexuality or sexual abuse prevention. Any prospective material should be made available for review for the parents of participants. Prior to introducing these materials, notice should be provided to parents in order to allow an opt-out should there be concerns or objections.
- Photography: Photos of vulnerable adults will not be used contrary to parental wishes and must not contain any personally identifying information about the adult either online or in print publications without prior permission from the appropriate party. This is easily handled by including a consent statement on programming registrations that are signed by the caregiver/guardian.

PASTORAL ABUSE

Pastoral abuse occurs when a spiritual leader in a position of authority relative to the receiving party utilizes their position (or perceived position) of authority to justify misconduct or other forms of abuse. This includes, but is not limited to, patterns of abuse such as manipulation and exploitation, intimidation, censorship, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, requirements of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a "divine" position in order to maintain power or control, isolation as a means of punishment, superiority and elitism, and patterns of behavior such as blaming, shaming, or shunning. It is unacceptable for any Diocesan clergy to pastorally abuse their parishioners as it is considered conduct unbecoming to the sacred calling of one in holy orders.

Regarding discipline, clergy are subject to disciplinary action upon committing offenses listed in the Anglican Church in North America's Constitution and Canons, and the Diocesan Constitution and Canons.

People sometimes may find they disagree with clergy or find themselves subject to accountability or church discipline (which, in and of itself, can be a healthy part of discipleship). This does not equate to pastoral abuse. It is expected that clergy will teach and uphold the doctrine of the church. Please consult the following for more information regarding the expectations of clergy:

- The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.
- *The Book of Common Prayer* (2019): The ordination vows (found under Episcopal Services) outline the expectation for faithful diligence in upholding the doctrine and discipline of Christ.
- *To Be a Christian* (2020): The ACNA Catechism outlines confession, absolution, and forgiveness, as well as describes the Church's authority.
- *The 39 Articles of Religion:* The ACNA upholds the 39 Articles of 1571 and their amendments which explain our views on the Sacraments as well as the expectation of clergy. In particular, the recognition that clergy are imperfect and should be examined carefully and removed if necessary.
- *The Jerusalem Declaration:* This 2008 declaration outlines our beliefs and expectations regarding Christian living, Sacraments, the authoritative standard of clerical orders, stewardship, unity, and our fidelity to orthodoxy.
- The ACNA's Constitution and Canons, and the Diocesan Constitution and Canons.

COUNSELING

One of the expectations of all clergy and other pastoral caregivers serving in the Diocese is that they offer pastoral counseling to members of the congregation if/when necessary and appropriate. Pastoral counseling occurs when church personnel offer spiritual direction or advice concerning moral or spiritual matters. This counseling is recommended to be offered for six [6] sessions per person. Pastoral counseling typically covers singular issues or questions, conflict management, confession, crisis counseling, premarital counseling and marriage counseling. If those crises continue beyond six sessions, or if there is a need for ongoing counseling, members should be referred to a certified or licensed professional. Fees or donations to an individual for pastoral counseling are prohibited.

Any clergy or staff member charging fees for counseling must possess appropriate professional credentials and proof of separate professional liability insurance, including coverage for sexual misconduct, at all times. Such persons offering paid spiritual direction or professional counseling shall submit that ministry for approval by the Rector (or, in the case of the Rector, the Bishop).

During any pastoral counseling sessions, clergy and pastoral caregivers are expected to maintain an environment that minimizes any existence, or appearance, of potentially inappropriate behavior or exploitation. It is also advised that clergy consult with their Bishop and/or refer to Diocesan policy on boundaries in pastoral counseling, including as they pertain to matters such as mandatory reporting and the seal of the confessional. Exploitation occurs when church personnel take advantage of the pastoral counseling relationship for the benefit of the pastoral counselor. Sexual exploitation includes sexual contact between church personnel and the recipient of the pastoral counseling services, regardless of who initiates the contact. Under certain circumstances, it is advisable to bring another pastor or staff member into a conversation or session - for example, if a counseling session raises the possibility of possible illegal activity or abuse, or if someone is making allegations or disclosing abuse or illegal activity. All clergy, employees, and vestry should maintain healthy boundaries and strive for emotionally healthy relationships.

Each congregation's leaders are asked consistently to raise awareness about these issues by normalizing the following principles:

- **Transparency:** it can be difficult to clearly state what you think, feel, or see happening, but it is a sign of emotional health to speak up when something is wrong. No one can improve or eradicate inappropriate behavior without exposing the issue. Avoid triangulation and protection of individuals who are acting inappropriately. Whether it is porn addiction, gossip, an affair, bullying, sexual jokes or comments, flirting, etc., bringing the issue into the light is always the path toward healing, accountability, sanctification, and emotional health.
- **See Something, Say Something:** if something is a concern to you, bring it to the appropriate leaders detailed within this document; including more than one leader in the discussion encourages accountability, transparency, and appropriate resolution.

Pastoral counseling should always be respectful and consistent with the intent of providing a safe and comfortable environment. Pastoral counseling should be conducted in appropriate settings at appropriate times and should not be held at places or times that would cause confusion about the nature of the relationship for the person being counseled.

Additionally, all clergy, employees, and vestry should maintain a physical environment that always minimizes any appearance of potentially inappropriate behavior, including when traveling or participating in events held at the church after business hours. It is wise to remain in public view when possible. It is strongly recommended that the doors to rooms used for pastoral care contain windows. It is generally not recommended that employees share a hotel room when traveling. No one-on-one pastoral counseling should be conducted in private living quarters.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION, SPIRITUAL DIRECTION, & DISCIPLESHIP

As Christians, we are encouraged to seek discipleship opportunities. This frequently manifests in 1:1, 1:2, or 1:3 relationships where participants meet regularly for a long-term partnership. This is not the same situation as pastoral counseling, which is intended for a singular focus and therefore is limited in scope. If a partnership of spiritual formation, spiritual direction-or discipleship is entered into long-term, consider these safeguards:

- Ensure this relationship is brought into the light among the leadership team of the church by informing multiple people of this partnership.
- If there are multiple people offering long-term spiritual direction or discipleship in your church, consider meeting every quarter to discuss the process and its benefits to the church, as well as accountability.
- If one clergy person is offering long-term spiritual direction or discipleship to another clergy person, bring the arrangement into the light by informing the office of the bishop of the relationship.
- Meet in a public place, not alone in one another's private living quarters.
- It is recommended that it be conducted by same biological sex participants in groups of at least 3 people total whenever possible.
- Follow guidelines regarding interaction and physical contact.
- Define the parameters of the relationship at the first meeting, articulating how one might discontinue the relationship without further explanation at any time; consider utilizing a signed waiver that outlines expectations, specifically protecting clarity regarding confession, confidentiality, and mandatory reporting.
- Communicate to whom the participant should report if he or she has any concerns (including the names and numbers of senior leadership, the bishop, or the Diocesan Reports Receivers).
- Include prayer and the study of Scripture in your regular time together.

In order to protect the emotional and spiritual health of all clergy, it is recommended that clergy also seek regular spiritual direction to ensure accountability and a strong support system. Spiritual Formation, Spiritual Direction & Discipleship with vulnerable adults: If spiritual formation, discipleship or spiritual direction with a vulnerable adult is entered into long-term, consider these safeguards in addition to those above:

- Gain the caregiver/guardian's consent.
- Meet in a predictable location at a predictable time (same time/place each occurrence).
- Guidelines outlined in this policy for interaction with vulnerable adults (regarding awareness, screening, interaction, and reporting) must be followed.

In order to protect the emotional and spiritual health of everyone involved, it is recommended that those in positions of discipleship also seek regular spiritual direction to ensure accountability and a strong support system.

PHYSICAL INTERACTION WITH VULNERABLE ADULTS

Clergy, employees, and vestry often have a powerful relationship of trust with the people to whom they minister. Betrayal of that trust through violation of sexual boundaries causes great emotional and spiritual harm. Such behavior is a denial of our calling as Christians and may be a violation of the law. We must take every step to prevent it, and to respond with swift justice should misconduct or abuse occur.

Physical contact should be for the benefit of the vulnerable adult and never be based upon the emotional needs of clergy, employees, or vestry. It is the Diocesan policy that all clergy, employees, and vestry are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of vulnerable adults. No form of physical discipline is acceptable.

This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by vulnerable adults. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to the caregiver or legal guardian.

Appropriate physical affection towards vulnerable adults is expected.

[Here is an example summary table of appropriate and inappropriate physical affection:]

Physical contact - for the benefit of the vulnerable adult - not the emotional needs of clergy, employees, or vestry

Appropriate Physical affection may include	Inappropriate physical affection may include
• High-fives • Handshakes • Fist bumps • Thumbs up • Side hugs • Smiling • Pats on the back	• Wrestling • Tickling • Sitting in laps (except for nursery age children) • Kissing in any form • Initiating frontal hugs • Commenting on children's bodies • Forcing unwanted affection

Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate behavior by anyone must be reported immediately to (1) the Rector and/or clergy in charge, **and** (2) the Senior Warden. If the allegation is against the Rector, notify the Bishop, the Senior Warden and the supervisor or other clergy. Any suspected abuse should be reported to law enforcement as well as the Rector and Senior Warden.

Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of clergy, employees, and vestry must always foster trust. Personal conduct must be above reproach.

Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant vulnerable adult. Anyone's preference not to be touched must be always respected.

Home Group Procedures
The Diocese and its churches do not exercise control or responsibility over home groups (defined as a small group meeting in a home for discipleship such as Bible study, worship, fellowship, etc.). The care and protection of vulnerable adults in such settings is always the responsibility of the caregiver/guardians of each vulnerable adult. Leaders of home groups organized by churches should be encouraged to read this policy and take the vulnerable adult abuse training provided.

Compliance
The requirements outlined in this Diocesan policy must be followed by each congregation. If an individual church's optional addendum to this policy includes additional, reasonable safety measures, all clergy, employees, and vestry should be held accountable to that addendum as well as this policy.

REPORTING

Anyone who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a vulnerable adult has been abused, abandoned, neglected, or exploited in violation of the law should immediately contact the appropriate state abuse hotline. [Hotline numbers vary by state - see resources below]. All reports are confidential and access to these reports is limited by specific criteria described in the appropriate state's statute(s).

National Adult Protective Services Association: www.napsa-now.org/help-in-your-area

Following a report to local authorities, when necessary, the Diocese also provides confidential reporting mechanisms to document incidents and to follow their protocols. Reporting is time sensitive and may not be covered by insurance if not completed within 24 hours. Diocesan reporting is done through a hotline [267-406-0680], email [reports@adlw.org], or an intake form on the Diocese's website [*coming*]. A sample incident report can be found under "Resources."

Throughout any inquiry or investigation, it is the responsibility of the Bishop to ensure that the following steps are being taken (though these steps should not be undertaken by the Bishop directly, in the case of a conflict of interest): (1) reach out to, and care for, any complainants (an Advocate, Chaplain, and/or a response team may be utilized in pastoral care); (2) alleged offenders should be treated with dignity and support; (3) maintain confidentiality utilizing maximum discretion.

The moment someone discloses abuse to someone, the primary responsibility of the listener is to enable a safe environment for the person who is disclosing the information. If reasonably possible, ask a Certified Adult, or other responsible adult, to join in listening to the account. If someone begins a conversation by implying he or she is about to disclose, and asks you if you can keep a secret, it is recommended that you remind him or her that your primary job is to keep them safe and sometimes that means getting help, and for that reason you cannot promise you will keep it secret.

Whenever someone discloses abuse, the following is recommended:

1. Listen! Do not probe or ask for details. Allow the person to tell you only what he/she is comfortable to share. Ask open ended questions like "Is there anything else you would like to share with me?" If possible, reflect to the person what you have heard for the sake of clarity.
2. Avoid expressing doubt or disbelief, judgment of the person, or shock or outrage. Be calm and compassionate.
3. Find out if the person is safe and/or has a safe place to go. Help him/her get to safety, if needed.

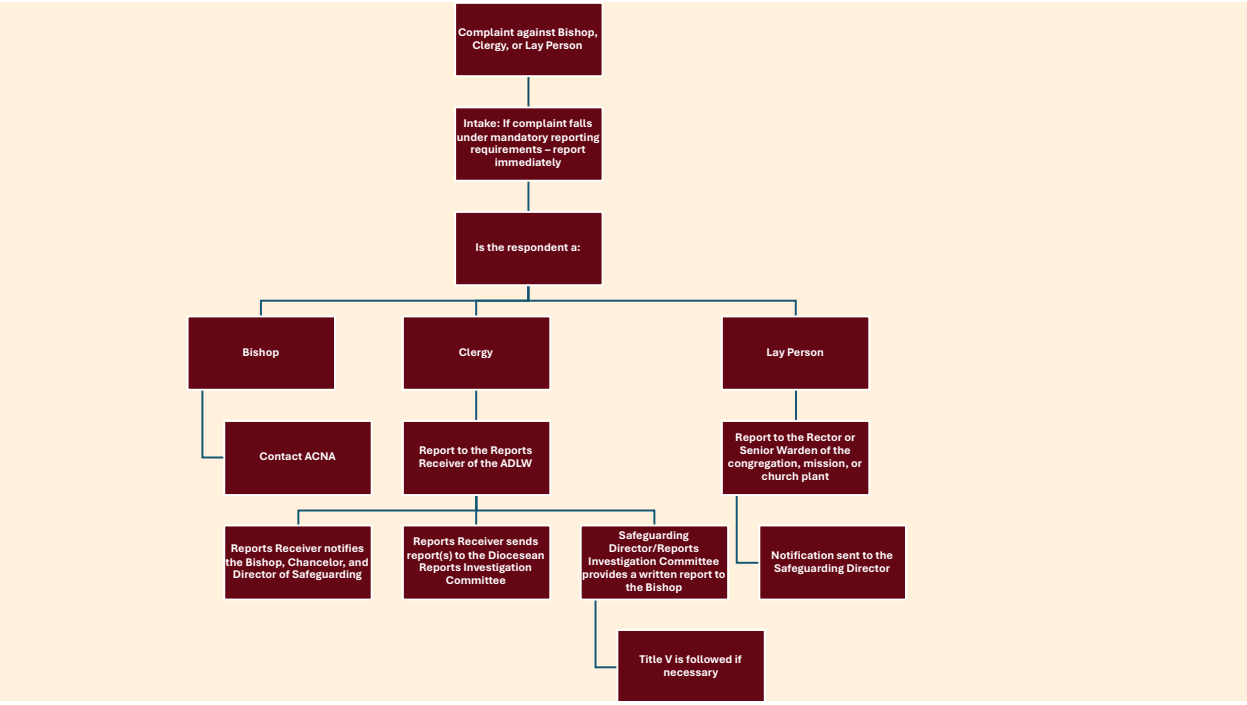
4. Some helpful things to say may include:
    a) "I hear you, and I take this seriously."
    b) "I'm very concerned about what you've shared and want to make sure you are safe."
    c) "Thank you for being brave enough to share this with me."
5. Reassure the person that you will hold their story in confidence insofar as you are able, letting them know that you may, legally or otherwise, be required to report what has been disclosed.
6. Determine if you need to report the allegation. Ask for help from appropriate authorities (e.g. the Director of Safeguarding or the Reports Receiver), if needed. If the complainant is a vulnerable adult and you are still unsure, the best practice would be to report the allegation.
7. After the conversation, immediately take notes of the conversation. Keep these notes in a safe and secure location to preserve confidentiality.

Someone just disclosed abuse to me.
How Should I Respond?
Say
Do
• Be compassionate! Listen. Stay calm.
• "I hear you, and I take this seriously."
• I'm very concerned about what you have shared and want to make sure you are safe."
• Thank you for being brave enough to share with me."
• Don't
• Express judgment doubt, or disbelief.
Ask
Do
• Ask open ended questions that give the person the opportunity to share without influencing his/her account.
• Find out if he/she is safe.
• Determine who, what, where, and when, if possible.
• Don't
• Probe or ask for details
• Push the person to tell you more than he/she is comfortable with.
Do
Do
• If necessary, help the person find safety.
• Determine if you are a mandatory reporter to the state authorities. If so, report.
• If not a mandatory reporter determine if it is prudent to report to the secular authorities anyway. If so, report.
• Report to appropriate church authorities.
• Make notes of the conversation and actions taken.
• Don't
• Tell anyone who does not need to know

For responding to and reporting vulnerable adult abuse specifically, see the sample procedures on responding to and reporting vulnerable adult abuse under "Resources" below.

DECISION TREE

Minor conflict should be handled within the church. For potential issues of misconduct or abuse, the following reporting procedures are recommended:


Complaint against Bishop, Clergy, or Lay Person
Intake: If complaint falls under mandatory reporting requirements – report immediately
Is the respondent a:
Bishop
Clergy
Lay Person
Contact ACNA
Report to the Reports Receiver of the ADLW
Report to the Rector or Senior Warden of the congregation, mission, or church plant
Reports Receiver notifies the Bishop, Chancelor, and Director of Safeguarding
Reports Receiver sends report(s) to the Diocesean Reports Investigation Committee
Safeguarding Director/Reports Investigation Committee provides a written report to the Bishop
Notification sent to the Safeguarding Director
Title V is followed if necessary

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST LAY LEADERS

If someone discloses abuse, it is not the responsibility of the recipient of that information to investigate or verify; he or she should report to the proper authorities who will investigate.

In all cases, the complainant will be assured that the church is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The initial verbal response should not convey doubt.

Any clergy involved in the process should not, at any time following the first receipt of the complaint, hear the confession of any person(s) involved. The clergy will comply with the reporting and notification requirements as contained in the diocesan, parish or other liability policies for insurance claims.

1. When the complainant is a vulnerable adult:
    1. All reports of abuse of vulnerable adults must be reported to state authorities immediately.
    2. If a person accused of abuse is not the vulnerable adult's guardian or otherwise a member of the household, the Rector or his designee should contact the vulnerable adult's guardians and offer support from the church.
    3. The Rector and Senior Warden shall be informed.
    4. Because there are legal implications, the person reporting should then contact a Diocesan Reports Receiver, who will deploy notification procedures including the Bishop, Chancellor, Chair of the Standing Committee, and the Director of Safeguarding. The Director of Safeguarding can assist with documentation and expansion of inquiry, if necessary. The church's legal counsel should also be notified.
2. When the complainant is an adult:
    1. Allegations of adult misconduct/abuse against a non-clergy leader will be reported to the Rector and the Senior Warden.
    2. The Rector and Vestry are responsible for the church's investigative and disciplinary procedures regarding adult misconduct/abuse allegations against lay leaders. It is recommended that all aspects of any inquiry or investigation be fully documented and filed.
    3. The Rector or Senior Warden will contact the Director of Safeguarding for transparency and accountability. The Diocese is available for guidance and templates for documentation.
    4. Allegations of adult misconduct/abuse against a non-clergy lay leader of the Diocese serving in a diocesan program must be reported immediately to a Diocesan Reports Receiver.
3. Suspension of employment or volunteer activities:
    1. The alleged offender's church-related employment or volunteer activity may be suspended by the Rector of the church or other person in charge of a church, after consultation with the bishop, until such time as the allegations of misconduct or abuse are resolved.

2. This leave of absence is without prejudice (i.e., it does not imply guilt or innocence of the person under investigation). Payment of salary and benefits to the employee may be discontinued at the discretion of the church-related employer only after consultation with the Bishop.

ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING CLERGY

If someone discloses abuse, it is not the responsibility of the recipient of that information to investigate or verify; they should report to the proper authorities who will investigate. In all cases, the complainant will be assured that the church is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The initial, verbal response should not convey doubt.

The Bishop, clergy, or anyone who may subsequently be involved in the process, will not, at any time following the first receipt of the complaint, hear the sacramental confession of any person(s) involved. The Bishop and clergy will comply with the reporting and notification requirements as contained in the diocesan, parish or other liability policies for insurance claims. Any member of the clergy who believes himself or herself to be accused of misconduct/abuse may request the Bishop to begin formal inquiry.

- When the complainant is a vulnerable adult:
    a) All reports of abuse of vulnerable adults must be reported to state authorities immediately.
    b) Any complaint of misconduct/abuse by any member of the clergy under the authority of the Bishop shall be reported immediately to a Diocesan Reports Receiver.
    c) The Diocesan Reports Receiver will assure the complainant that the Diocese is concerned and that the complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly.
    d) Upon receiving a complaint of misconduct/abuse against clergy, the Diocesan Reports Receiver will notify the Bishop, the Chancellor, and the Chair of the Standing Committee.
    e) If the complaint is against a member of the clergy, the Diocesan Reports Receivers should evaluate the report in a timely manner and recommend to the Bishop whether the report discloses reasonable grounds to believe an offense under Title V has been committed. With the advice of the Standing Committee (or its designated subcommittee, the Bishop shall determine whether a report of misconduct should move to an investigation stage. If so, the Diocesan Reports Investigation Committee should investigate the complaint and provide a written report to the Bishop, Chancellor, and Chair of the Standing Committee.
    f) Prior to a decision, all parties involved may be invited to provide non-adversarial responses to the inquiry report (including complainant, guardian, and/or respondent). This invitation may be declined.

g) Upon completion of the inquiry, the Bishop can take whatever action he, the Chancellor, and Chair of the Standing Committee deem appropriate, including removal, mediation, and/or reconciliation, or the use of a Godly Admonition.
h) Each Diocese shall facilitate provision of pastoral care for those making reports that are not dismissed, as well as for the clergy who are subject of such reports.
i) If enough evidence is found that a canonical offense has been committed, a third-party investigation may be warranted].
j) Canonical procedures will be employed according to the Constitution and Canons of the ADLW and the ACNA.

- When the complainant is an adult:
  a) All of section 1.b. in the preceding paragraph applies.
  b) All reports of pastoral abuse (see definition) should be reported to a Diocesan Reports Receiver through the Diocesan hotline [267-406-0680], online [www.adlw.org], via email [reports@adlw.org], or by bringing the matter to the attention of their supervising clergy or Bishop.

- Suspension of employment or leadership:
  a) The alleged clergy offender may be inhibited by the Bishop under ACNA Canons until such time as the allegations of misconduct/abuse are resolved.
  b) This inhibition is without prejudice (i.e. does not imply guilt or innocence of the person under investigation). Payment of salary and benefits to the clergy may be discontinued at the discretion of the church-related employer after consultation with the Bishop.

ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING THE BISHOP

Any person believing that the Bishop has engaged in any misconduct/abuse should immediately submit an allegation in writing to the Province via email at misconduct@anglicanchurch.net.

At times, when a church leader receiving reports of misconduct/abuse puts together the separate pieces of information provided by different parties, the leader may discern a pattern or recognize information that triggers further investigation and/or a report to state authorities. (Such internal church reporting procedures are not intended to supersede any applicable legal reporting requirements.)

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

Incidents of vulnerable adult abuse, and the secrecy that often surrounds them, can cause devastating harm to the complainants as well as to the church. Therefore, where current or past abuse has been perpetrated by clergy, employees, or vestry, the church shall provide consultation to encourage the discussion of such incidents and to provide a means to facilitate healing within the church. Under "Resources," "Caring for the Community" provides a suggested model for congregational trauma debriefing.

COMPLIANCE

COMPLIANCE

The Bishop, the Director of Safeguarding, and the Standing Committee are responsible for the creation and promulgation of the diocesan "Policy for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults," in accordance with the canons of the Diocese.

The Standing Committee will, upon receipt of the bi-annual audit from the Director of Safeguarding update and revise the Policy considering the recommendations/directions made by the Safeguarding Committee which will be based upon practical experiences, medical and other scholarly research, legal developments, and other relevant considerations.

The Rector has overall responsibility for the compliance and administration of this policy within the church he/she leads and for providing all reports requested by the Diocese.

ADLW requires that, at a minimum, each church (see definition) is expected to have in place these four procedures regarding vulnerable adults:

Procedure 1: Awareness
Procedure 2: Behavioral Expectations
Procedure 3: Reporting
Procedure 4: Compliance

POLICY OVERSIGHT

The Diocesan Office is responsible for:

- upholding the Constitution and Canons of the ACNA and the ADLW.
- setting additional, clear diocesan policies and procedures.
- following through on those policies and procedures to provide a consistent and transparent process.
- reporting to relevant law enforcement authorities in conformity with applicable law when necessary.

Clergy are responsible for:

- knowing and abiding by the Diocesan policies and procedures.
- ensuring that timely training, and resulting written acknowledgements, occur for all parties identified within these policies who are under their supervision.
- reporting to a Diocesan Reports Receiver any allegation of clergy misconduct/abuse.
- reporting to relevant law enforcement authorities in conformity with applicable law when necessary.
- providing proof of compliance for all such policies and procedures to the Diocesan office upon request.

Rectors and Wardens are responsible for:

- maintaining record keeping of all procedures outlined in this document.
- upholding the policies set forth in this document, which represent an appropriate standard of care, by adopting them as their own.
- reconciling this policy with the conditions of each congregation's insurance coverage and the need for a contextualized policy, ensuring the conditions to your insurance coverage are met.
- reviewing your insurance policy and calling the diocesan Director of Safeguarding if you have any questions; the Diocese assumes no responsibility for a congregation's non-compliance with its insurance carrier's policy.
- providing proof of compliance with all such policies and procedures to the Director of Safeguarding upon request.

Employees and vestry are responsible for:

- abiding by the Diocesan policies.
- reporting to the Rector and Senior Warden any allegation of employee/lay person misconduct or abuse (allegations of clergy are to be reported directly to a Diocesan Reports Receiver).
- reporting to relevant law enforcement authorities in conformity with applicable law when necessary.

In some cases, insurance companies require a response within a specific timeframe, or the institution forfeits coverage. A congregation's adoption of written standards of conduct may also be required by insurers as a condition of coverage. Strong warranty language in some policies requires careful compliance on the part of insured entities. Failure to comply with policy standards could result in denial of insurance coverage in the event of a claim.

COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTATION

Churches are responsible for tracking the screening and training requirements for all non-clergy Certified Adults in their church. The Diocesan office is responsible for tracking screening and training clergy, and diocesan employees. The Diocese assumes no responsibility for a church's non-compliance with their insurance carrier's policy on acknowledgment of receipt of the church's policies and procedures or insurance carrier screening or training requirements.

All churches will update their rosters of clergy, employees, and vestry annually and updated signed documents are due to the Director of Safeguarding annually.

Anyone considered a leader in the Diocese or in any of the Diocesan congregations, missions, or church plants is expected to sign an individual policy acknowledgement every two years. This includes all Diocesan staff and clergy, and vestry.

This document is provided to the churches and congregations in the ADLW as minimum expectations.

Revised versions of this policy will be distributed to each congregation every two years, if updated, with the understanding that the congregation has the rest of the calendar year to come into compliance with any changes. It will be the responsibility of the Rector of each church to ensure all clergy, employees, and vestry are made aware of the church's policies and that those who are required to complete approved training do so.

See "Resources" for additional resources on risk management and compliance for vulnerable adult ministries.

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

The following resources are offered to assist churches and Clergy, employees, and vestry in their protection of individual members of each congregation.

Screening and Training Resources

Sample Supervisory Plan

Additional Sample Supervisory Plans (Gulf Atlantic Diocese)

Caring for the Community Resources

Safeguarding Resources (Gulf Atlantic Diocese)

Sample Policy Regarding Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment (Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic)

Sample Policy on Registered Sex Offenders (Diocese of Pittsburgh)

National Adult Protective Services Association: www.napsa-now.org/help-in-your-area/

Mandated reporter information: www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2018-07/Clergy%20as%20Mandated%20Reporters%20of%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Neglect.pdf

Make us always thankful for your loving providence, and give us grace to honor you with all that you have entrusted to us; that we, remembering the account we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

©*Book of Common Prayer*, 2019, Prayer 22